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Strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, including on the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the statement of the President of the Security Council dated 16 December 2014 (S/PRST/2014/27), in which the Council requested that the Secretary-General submit an annual report on ways to strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union on issues of peace and security in Africa, including on the work of the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU). The report provides an update on efforts to enhance the partnership between the two organizations and on the activities of UNOAU since the issuance of the previous report (S/2017/744), in August 2017, including issues reflected in Council resolution 2378 (2017).

II. The United Nations and the African Union strategic partnership

United Nations Security Council and African Union Peace and Security Council

2. The United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council made commendable progress in enhancing collaboration on peace and security issues in Africa. On 7 and 8 September 2017, the members of the two bodies held their second informal joint meeting and eleventh joint consultative meeting in Addis Ababa. I welcome the recognition, expressed by both Councils, of the importance of the strategic partnership between the two organizations and of the need to further strengthen that partnership. I further welcome the intention expressed by members of the two Councils to conduct joint missions to conflict areas in Africa to facilitate the formulation of common positions and recommendations for joint or coordinated action. Members of the two Councils also recognized that briefings by special representatives and envoys of each organization to both bodies could better align and strengthen cooperation. During the reporting period, my special representatives and envoys or their deputies briefed the Peace and Security Council

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on the situations in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and the Sudan, as well as on the prevention of genocide.

3. Participants in the eleventh joint consultative meeting of the two Councils also expressed their convergence in positions on the most intractable conflict situations on the continent, specifically on conflict and crisis situations in Somalia, South Sudan and the Lake Chad Basin. Members of the two Councils agreed that it was necessary to integrate activities related to peacebuilding, recognized that the root causes of conflict must be addressed and underlined the need for enhanced coordination between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peace and Security Council.

4. The Peace and Security Council conducted field missions to Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. The missions were supported by the United Nations and enabled the Peace and Security Council to gain first-hand insight into the realities on the ground and to reflect them in its decisions. The three African non-permanent members of the Security Council remained a critical link between the two Councils, as they articulated African perspectives and common positions on issues of concern to the continent. Representatives of those members of the Security Council participated in Peace and Security Council meetings, and the Secretariat and the African Union Commission regularly brief African members of the Security Council on issues of mutual concern.

5. The collective action of the United Nations and the African Union on peace and security in Africa will continue to be most effective if the United Nations is closely aligned to or supports the decisions and engagements of the African Union and subregional organizations. The effectiveness of such joint action was clearly illustrated in the close collaboration between the United Nations, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the Gambia and in Guinea-Bissau. I remain committed to continuing to work with the African Union and subregional organizations in addressing conflicts and political crises across the continent.

United Nations Secretariat and African Union Commission

6. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, and I have continued to prioritize the development of a systematic, predictable and strategic partnership that is based on the principle of mutual respect and comparative advantages and that reinforces the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security, while also recognizing the important role of regional organizations consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter. Since the signing of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union is characterized by closer collaboration, more regular exchange of information and consultations and coordinated action. At the opening ceremony of the thirtieth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa in January 2018, I reaffirmed the strong commitment of the United Nations to its African Member States. I recalled that, in one year, the United Nations and the African Union would hold the first annual conference at the summit level, and the Chairperson and I signed the joint framework and a second agreement, namely, the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I noted that the partnership was grounded in sound principles of human rights and good governance. Both organizations recognize the importance of the

nexus between peace and security and development and that the focus of their joint efforts must be the search for sustainable political solutions.

7. In January, I attended the Peace and Security Council summit on combating the transnational threat of terrorism in Africa, at which I highlighted the need for a sustained, cooperative and coordinated approach to tackling terrorism. Subsequently, the Office of Counter-Terrorism undertook a follow-up mission to Algiers and Addis Ababa in March to engage with African Union counterparts in the development of a draft memorandum of understanding for collaboration and capacity-building support in relation to counter-terrorism and the prevention of violent extremism in the context of the joint framework.

8. The first high-level dialogue on human rights between the African Union and the United Nations was held in Addis Ababa on 24 April and attended by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. At the meeting, the two organizations agreed to enhance collaboration in human rights and peace and security, including on the women and peace and security agenda and in the compliance and accountability frameworks for African Union peace support operations.

9. Cooperation on the women and peace and security agenda has seen progress during the past year. On 16 May 2018, the Peace and Security Council endorsed the African Union results framework for monitoring and reporting on the women and peace and security agenda in Africa, which was developed with the technical assistance of the United Nations Entity for Gender and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Development Programme and international partners and is designed to help to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women. After holding the first forum in New York in June 2017, the African Women Leaders Network held the second Women Leaders Forum for Africa's Transformation in Addis Ababa from 24 to 26 April, under the auspices of the African Union Commission, in partnership with the United Nations and with the support of the Government of Germany. The Network adopted its priority areas of work, including on promoting leadership by women in peace and security and mobilizing political support to denounce sexual violence in conflict. On 27 February 2018, the Network launched the New York Group of Friends of the Network with the aim of mobilizing support for action from Member States. Co-chaired by Ghana and Germany, the Group has approximately 40 members from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

10. The thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security were held in New York in September 2017 and in Addis Ababa in January 2018, respectively. At those meetings, senior officials held extensive discussions on the most pressing peace and security challenges in Africa and reviewed the situations in the Central African Republic and the Horn of Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Mali and the Sahel, Somalia and South Sudan. They underlined the importance of building complementarities and harnessing synergies in the implementation of the joint framework. They also agreed to enhance cooperation in supporting inclusive, credible and peaceful elections and to continue to work on sustainable and predictable funding for African Union peace support operations, including through United Nations assessed contributions.

11. Staff from the Secretariat and the African Union Commission met in Addis Ababa on 7 and 8 December 2017 for the eleventh annual United Nations-African Union joint consultative meeting on the prevention and management of conflict. The participants in the meeting strengthened working relationships, exchanged information and developed joint action plans. The increased engagement between the

United Nations and the African Union illustrates the progress the two organizations have made in strengthening their partnership over the past year.

12. Furthermore, the Secretariat and the African Union Commission continued to implement two knowledge exchange programmes in the areas of field support: the staff exchange programme initiated in January 2017 and the participation of Commission staff in the senior mission leadership and resource training programmes of the Secretariat.

III. Operational partnership of the United Nations and the African Union

Challenges and opportunities to peace and security in Africa

13. The overall peace and security situation on the continent remained largely unchanged. Efforts to resolve conflicts in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Mali and the Sahel, Somalia, South Sudan and the Lake Chad Basin region are ongoing, with the continued political efforts of the United Nations, the African Union and regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, among others. Political transitions continue to divide already fragile countries, often leading to violence. In West Africa, ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations remain engaged in Burkina Faso, the Gambia and Togo. The three organizations also jointly conducted good offices initiatives during the elections in Liberia in October 2017 and in Sierra Leone in March 2018.

14. The primary underlying structural challenges to peace and security continue to be weaknesses in internal governance, including the rule of law, human rights, delivery of basic services, managing natural resources, the effects of climate change and food insecurity. These weaknesses are also exacerbated as a result of increased inequality, corruption, violations of human rights, criminality — including cross-border and international crime — and large swathes of territory without effective State authority. The recent signing of the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda illustrates the importance that both institutions attach to tackling the root causes of conflict in a collaborative manner.

15. The root causes of some national conflicts may have been fuelled by regional or global factors, in particular where affiliates of Al-Qaida and of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant have exploited local grievances rooted in marginalization and weak State institutions. The impact of climate change on peace and security in Africa is increasing, particularly in the Lake Chad Basin, the Sahel region and the Horn of Africa region, where already vulnerable communities have been severely affected. The United Nations continues to work with national Governments, subregional organizations and the African Union to address these complex challenges.

16. The African Union is implementing an institutional reform agenda aimed at ensuring greater effectiveness and efficiency. A key objective of the reform agenda is to align the organization with the strategic priorities agreed upon at the twenty-eighth Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in January 2017, and to implement a model of self-financing for the African Union. Those reforms should enable the African Union to partner more effectively with the United Nations and other organizations in addressing the peace and security challenges on the continent.

17. Between January and March 2018, the African Union considered three flagship projects aimed at strengthening regional integration and promoting economic development, namely, the agreement on the African Continental Free Trade Area and

related protocols, adopted in Kigali in March; the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to Free Movement of Persons, Rights of Residence and Right of Establishment and its draft implementation road map; and the decision on the establishment of a Single African Air Transport Market. I commend African leaders for these important initiatives.

Partnership in conflict prevention and peacemaking

18. The United Nations continued to work with the African Union and regional economic communities and regional mechanisms on conflict prevention and peacemaking. Recent experience has confirmed that the success of these initiatives has depended, to a large degree, on the active regional support and the engagement of regional organizations and the international community in the peace process.

19. As an illustration, efforts to prevent conflict and sustain peace in West Africa have been largely successful. ECOWAS is actively engaged in addressing the political situation in Togo, under the leadership of the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo. In Guinea-Bissau, ECOWAS imposed sanctions on 19 individuals deemed to be obstructing the implementation of the Conakry Agreement on the Implementation of the Economic Community of West African States Roadmap for the Resolution of the Political Crisis in Guinea-Bissau. The mediation by ECOWAS led to a breakthrough with the appointment of a consensual Prime Minister on 16 April. In Mali and the Sahel, the African Union developed a Sahel strategy, inviting the United Nations and other stakeholders to advance a shared analysis of and a shared strategy on ways to address the myriad of structural problems affecting the Sahel. Participants in the Strategic Consultative Meeting on the Sahel, held in Nouakchott on 28 and 29 March, co-hosted by the African Union and attended by the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, recognized that violence, conflict and terrorism in the region can only be ended by addressing their root causes, which included a lack of access to basic rights, services and economic opportunities, as well as socioeconomic exclusion, marginalization, discrimination and corruption. That objective also formed the cornerstone of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel. The United Nations and the African Union have continued to collaborate to ensure greater harmonization and coordination of Sahel strategies under the Ministerial Coordination Platform for the Sahel. The Platform is the highest regionally owned political and operational mechanism responsible for ensuring coherence among the various initiatives and strategies for the Sahel.

20. In Libya, the United Nations also worked closely with the African Union. On 16 January, the Chairperson of the African Union and my Special Representative for Libya and Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya issued a joint statement to underscore a coordinated approach between the two organizations. They also agreed that the organizations should work together to facilitate consensus among Libyans in order to unify institutions and form an inclusive national Government. On 17 April, my Special Representative participated in the fifth meeting of the African Union Ad Hoc High-level Committee on Libya. The Committee acknowledged the role being played by the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and reiterated the importance of enhancing cooperation between the two organizations in support of free, fair and credible elections. During the Quartet meeting on Libya held in Cairo on 30 April, my Special Representative met the High Representative of the African Union for Mali and the Sahel, Pierre Buyoya, who attended on behalf of the African Union High Representative for Libya, Jakaya Kikwete. On 29 May, my Special Representative met with representatives of several African Member States and the President of the Congo, Sassou Nguesso, in his capacity as Committee Chair, during a meeting with Libyan political leaders held in Paris and hosted by the President of

France, Emmanuel Macron. At the meeting, Libyan participants committed to holding elections by the end of 2018. In addition, the United Nations worked with the African Union and the European Union to facilitate the voluntary return of more than 15,000 stranded migrants and 1,300 refugees.

21. In South Sudan, the United Nations and the African Union continued to support the high-level revitalization forum led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which is aimed at ending hostilities and revitalizing a road map for sustainable peace. The third phase of the talks, held in May, sought to forge compromise among the parties on key issues of governance and security. IGAD made commendable efforts to narrow the positions of the parties on those issues, including through shuttle diplomacy and proximity talks. The involvement of the South Sudan Council of Churches to facilitate stakeholder talks within South Sudan during the most recent round was also a noteworthy attempt to build trust and confidence among the parties and to empower them to reach a compromise. On 31 May, the IGAD Council of Ministers met and authorized the mediators to embark on another round of proximity talks based on the common ground identified during recent consultations. The United Nations, the African Union and IGAD urged the parties to use the next round of talks to engage constructively and break the deadlock on the outstanding issues relating to governance and security. I welcome the continued engagement of the Peace and Security Council, as demonstrated by the field mission undertaken from 15 to 19 April, when it held extensive discussions with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and with Government and civic leaders. The Peace and Security Council delegation expressed full support for the ongoing peace efforts led by IGAD and stressed the need for complementarity among all peace initiatives. The three organizations also strongly condemned the persistent and blatant violation of the renewed cessation of hostilities agreement signed in December. To that end, the African Union, IGAD and the Security Council renewed their resolve to take punitive measures against individuals bent on disrupting the peace.

22. In Burundi, concerns over a lack of progress in the inter-Burundian dialogue led by the East African Community persisted, with continued reports of the curtailment of fundamental freedoms, arbitrary arrests, detentions and killings. In order to support the joint efforts of the United Nations and African Union to help Burundian stakeholders to find sustainable solutions to the political crisis and the resulting humanitarian situation, my Special Envoy for Burundi travelled to Addis Ababa in November and December 2017 as well as in January and March 2018 for consultations with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union. The joint technical working group of the East African Community, the African Union and the United Nations held meetings in September, November and December 2017 to pave the way for dialogue sessions. My Special Envoy will continue to explore options with the East African Community and the African Union to move the peace process forward.

23. With regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I welcome the continued progress towards the attainment of key electoral milestones despite the persistent distrust among political actors over the implementation of the confidence-building measures enshrined in the political agreement of 31 December 2016. Continued cooperation and coordination among partners, as seen in the joint or aligned statements of the United Nations and the African Union, remain essential. The security and humanitarian situation is still of great concern, with hundreds of thousands of Congolese citizens in the eastern part of the country having fled their homes because of attacks by armed groups. The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continued to work with the Congolese authorities to address the grave security challenges facing the country. The United Nations and the African Union, along with other regional bodies,

including the Southern African Development Community (SADC), continued to implement the Pact on Stability, Security and Development in the Great Lakes Region of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region, as well as the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. On 26 and 27 February, in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the Framework, my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region and the African Union convened a workshop in Addis Ababa to assess the implementation of commitments under the Framework and to formulate concrete recommendations on how to generate renewed momentum and promote greater ownership by stakeholders.

24. With regard to Cameroon, I am increasingly concerned about the crisis in the north-western and south-western regions of the country. The United Nations called for an inclusive dialogue to find lasting solutions to the crisis and expressed its readiness to support national decentralization efforts within the framework of the Constitution. Conflict prevention efforts were led by my Special Representative for Central Africa and by the United Nations country team with a view to averting a deepening of the political crisis and further violence in the country. Further conflict prevention efforts by the international community, including the Economic Community of Central African States and the African Union, are needed to address the crisis.

25. Last, my Special Representative to the African Union undertook, in coordination with the African Union, good offices missions to the Comoros and Madagascar to engage Government, opposition, civic leaders, representatives of SADC and other relevant stakeholders to support measures to avert political crises and violence. After 27 April, my Special Adviser on Madagascar continued the close United Nations-African Union engagement in Madagascar as part of the efforts of the international community to facilitate the Malagasy-led dialogue.

Partnership in peacekeeping and peace support operations

26. Half of the United Nations peacekeeping operations are currently deployed in Africa. In line with the primacy of politics as the hallmark of the United Nations approach, the strategic partnership with the African Union has prompted peacekeeping operations on the continent to increase efforts in support of a common vision. This was exemplified with the joint field visit to the Central African Republic and the Sudan undertaken by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union in April. Their subsequent joint briefings to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and then to the United Nations Security Council further demonstrated how the complementarity of the two organizations can be instrumental to the benefit of operations on the ground. While United Nations peacekeeping missions are neither suited nor equipped to engage in counter-terrorism operations, regional actors on the African continent have continued to assume a greater role in such operations.

27. In the Sudan, the United Nations and the African Union continued to support peace and stability through the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The United Nations continued to support the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, which is leading efforts to reinvigorate the peace process. Based on the joint strategic review of UNAMID conducted in April, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and I submitted a joint special report on 1 June to both councils recommending a revised concept for the Operation. The two organizations also continued to work together to facilitate the resolution of outstanding border issues between South Sudan and the Sudan, through the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei.

28. In the Central African Republic, the United Nations, including the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, supported the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation led by the African Union, including through logistics and mediation expertise. That support facilitated the dialogue at the national level and supported the Government in reconciliation processes at the local level. Cooperation also continued with the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army. Following the withdrawal of the Ugandan forces and United States forces, the United Nations, in collaboration with the African Union, facilitated two conferences of sector commanders, one in Entebbe, Uganda, in November 2017 and the other in Addis Ababa in March 2018, with the aim of preventing the Lord's Resistance Army and other armed groups from continuing to take advantage of the security vacuum.

29. In Mali and the Sahel, following Security Council resolution 2359 (2017), in which the Council welcomed the deployment of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, the African Union, supported by the United Nations, undertook a mission to the Joint Force headquarters in October to assess progress in establishing the Joint Force. The African Union provided strategic guidance in establishing the multinational force headquarters and assessed the assistance that the African Union and other partners could offer. In line with resolution 2391 (2017), in which the Council authorized specific support by the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali for the Joint Force, technical and financial arrangements were concluded for the implementation of such support. In April, the Peace and Security Council renewed the mandate of the Joint Force for another year. In Mali, the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and ECOWAS worked as part of the international mediation team led by Algeria to support Malian parties in implementing the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali through the Agreement Monitoring Committee.

30. At the Somalia Security Conference held in Mogadishu on 4 December, the Federal Government of Somalia shared the results of the operational readiness assessment of the Somali National Army, which revealed the current challenge faced by the national army in taking over security responsibility from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). Acknowledging an urgent need to build the capacity of the national army and to develop a realistic plan to transfer national security responsibilities from AMISOM to the national army, the Federal Government of Somalia, with support from international partners, including AMISOM, developed a transition plan. The Federal Government of Somalia, Federal Member States and international partners reiterated their commitment to supporting the implementation of the plan, including at the Somalia Security High-Level Meeting, held in Brussels on 2 May. With regard to AMISOM funding, my Special Envoy, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Ramtane Lamamra, undertook consultations with a broad range of AMISOM key partners to identify viable options for the future funding of AMISOM. The Special Envoys submitted their report to the Secretary-General and the Chairperson in early April; the report was subsequently transmitted to the United Nations Security Council and to the African Union Peace and Security Council, and, together with the transition plan, guided the African Union-United Nations joint review of AMISOM. From 11 to 19 May, the joint review was carried out with the participation of all AMISOM police- and troop-contributing countries, and international partners. The letter of the Secretary-General on its outcome is to be issued to the Security Council to inform the discussion of the Council on the renewal of the AMISOM mandate.

31. With assistance from the African Union and international partners, the Lake Chad Basin Commission continued to support the efforts of the Multinational Joint

Task Force to combat Boko Haram. Between November and May, two major conferences were held to address the root causes of the conflict through the development of a stabilization strategy for the Lake Chad region. My Special Representatives for Central Africa and for West Africa and the Sahel, supported by the respective United Nations country teams, have advocated the establishment of a comprehensive joint regional strategy that addresses the root causes of the crisis. Efforts are also under way to ensure closer links between humanitarian and development programming, in cooperation with financial institutions such as the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

Partnership in peacebuilding and rule of law

32. On 18 September, the United Nations and the African Union signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen cooperation in support of efforts aimed at peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Africa, taking a concrete step towards the implementation of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. On 7 December, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peace and Security Council held their annual meeting in Addis Ababa, at which participants expressed support for an increased focus on conflict prevention, good governance, human rights and national reconciliation. The participants also underscored the importance of enhancing coordination to better address the root causes of conflict, including efforts to address growing transnational and cross-border challenges to peacebuilding. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support highlighted key country-specific and cross-border initiatives supported by the Peacebuilding Fund, with successful outcomes of projects to enhance transitional justice mechanisms, justice sector and security sector reform, political dialogue and mediation, the empowerment of youth and women, and community-based programmes against violent extremism and radicalization.

33. The United Nations and the African Union also collaborated in key areas of the rule of law and security institutions. In line with the African Union Master Road Map of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020, the United Nations provided support and advice on the recommendation of the Peace and Security Council to declare September of each year until 2020 Africa Amnesty Month for the surrender of illegally owned weapons and arms, and on the development of African Union guidance on effective arms and ammunition management in its peace support operations. In addition, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa provided assistance to Central African States in strengthening their capacity to effectively implement the Kinshasa Convention for the control of small arms and light weapons.

34. Following the development of the African Union operational guidance notes on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the United Nations continued to support the predeployment training of the Eastern African Standby Force and the mapping of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration training across Africa under the relevant African Union capacity-building programme. In addition, the United Nations supported the African Union in developing a regional strategy for the screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons formerly associated with Boko Haram.

35. On 14 March, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in partnership with the United Nations, the African Union and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, organized a workshop in Brussels on mapping multilateral approaches to security sector reform. From 4 to 8 June, the African Union, in partnership with the United Nations,

supported a sensitization workshop in Addis Ababa for security sector officials of Madagascar, aimed at making further progress in the country in that area.

36. The United Nations and the African Union continued to implement the 2017 memorandum of understanding on mine action. The United Nations provided technical guidance and support for the implementation of the African Union Mine Action and Explosive Remnants of War Strategic Framework and its pilot project on ammunition safety management. Jointly developed safety information protocols were distributed in five languages to military personnel of African Union peace support operations and to Member States. The United Nations also participated in an improvised explosive device threat assessment in Burkina Faso and carried out mine action interventions in Guinea-Bissau and Malawi.

37. In October 2017, the African Union, the United Nations, regional economic communities, regional mechanisms and other partners conducted a pilot predeployment training course for Ethiopian and Zambian individual police officers. In addition, the United Nations provided support in the development of a police predeployment training package specific to AMISOM. The African Union also co-hosted, in Addis Ababa on 4 December 2017, the first course for senior female police commanders aimed at preparing them for leadership roles in United Nations and African Union peace support operations. The second such course in Africa was conducted in Dakar from 3 to 9 May 2018. The African Union also participated in the United Nations course for police planners. In January 2018, the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security of the African Union adopted a policy for international policing in peace support operations. The United Nations-African Union partnership continued to grow through joint training and curriculum development. The United Nations provided expert advice in the development of 13 police guidance documents of the African Union.

IV. Support for African Union Peace Support Operations

Update on the implementation of the Peace Fund

38. In its resolution 2378 (2017), the Security Council recalled the commitment made by the Assembly of the African Union at its twenty-fourth ordinary session, held in January 2015, to fund 25 per cent of the cost of its peace and security efforts, including peace support operations. The Security Council also expressed its intention to give further consideration to practical steps that could be taken and to the conditions necessary to establish the mechanism through which peace support operations led by the African Union and authorized by the Security Council could be partly financed through United Nations assessed contributions, on a case-by-case basis. The African Union has taken steps towards the implementation of the Peace Fund. Since my previous report, the Assembly of the African Union adopted an instrument relating to the enhanced governance and management structure of the Peace Fund at its thirtieth ordinary session, paving the way for the establishment of a board of trustees, an executive management committee and an independent evaluation panel, and the recruitment of a fund manager and the staff of the Peace Fund secretariat.

39. As of June 2018, States members of the African Union had contributed $45.7 million to the Peace Fund, the highest level of contributions since the establishment of the Fund in 1993. To reach the endowment target of $400 million by 2021, as set in a decision taken by the Assembly in July 2016, States members of the African Union have been assessed $65 million annually in 2017 and 2018 and will be assessed $90 million annually between 2019 and 2021.

40. In 2018, a key objective of the African Union is to accelerate the full implementation of the governance and management structures of the Peace Fund. At its 770th meeting, held on 2 May, the Peace and Security Council requested the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to appoint the Board of Trustees of the Peace Fund by mid-June 2018. It further requested the Chairperson of the Commission to develop the financial and procurement rules and regulations of the Peace Fund, to elaborate standard operating procedures and manuals, to establish the Executive Management Committee, and to commence the recruitment of staff for the Peace Fund secretariat by September 2018. A second key objective is for the High Representative for the Peace Fund, Donald Kaberuka, to intensify outreach and engagement with States members of the African Union as well as with external partners.

Update on the development of compliance frameworks

41. The development of a compliance framework for international humanitarian law and human rights and for conduct and discipline for African Union peace support operations remains a priority for the partnership and is an essential aspect to achieve greater accountability, transparency and protection for human rights. The Secretariat worked closely with the African Union Commission to develop key components of the compliance framework pursuant to Security Council resolutions 2320 (2016) and 2378 (2017).

42. These collaborative efforts have led to key achievements. The policies on conduct and discipline and on prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse have been finalized. Guidance and certification notes on human rights screening as part of the guidelines for troop-contributing countries are currently being developed to ensure that personnel deployed to African Union peace support operations do not have prior records of human rights violations.

43. Other initiatives include the preparation by the African Union of training standards for the integrated protection of civilians to familiarize peace support operations personnel with the rules and standards of international humanitarian law, human rights, child protection, detention issues and specific protection measures for women in peace support operations contexts. The African Union also conducted assessment missions to AMISOM and the Multinational Joint Task Force in March and April, respectively, to identify gaps and lessons learned in enhancing compliance in African Union peace support operations. In November 2017, the United Nations and the African Union held a joint workshop on accountability mechanisms for African Union peace support operations to identify good practices and the next steps with respect to oversight and the implementation of accountability mechanisms for violations of human rights. The United Nations facilitated the participation of African Union representatives in the United Nations continuous learning programme for conduct and discipline personnel in United Nations field missions in May 2018. This collaboration supports the ongoing development of the compliance and accountability framework.

44. The African Union Commission also focused on implementing compliance structures and mechanisms both at the mission level and at headquarters. A compliance cluster has been established within the African Union, with representatives from departments with an institutional role relating to human rights and conduct and discipline. The African Union made efforts to enhance compliance in its mandated and authorized missions, which included deploying an additional three human rights officers in AMISOM; launching processes for the revision and harmonization of AMISOM standard operating procedures for boards of inquiry; seeking approval for AMISOM standard operating procedures on ex gratia payments

to victims of AMISOM operations and for dedicated funds; and supporting the Multinational Joint Task Force in the development of a mission-wide strategy on the protection of civilians.

Update on strengthening the operational readiness of the African Standby Force as the overall framework for peace support operations

45. Progress has been reported in making four of the African Standby Force regional brigades operational. An independent verification, confirmation and validation exercise, in which the United Nations participated as an observer, was conducted in 2017 to ascertain the level of readiness of the regional standby forces. Although more needs to be done in terms of mandating, financing and logistical support, as well as further developing civilian and police capabilities, the report on the exercise confirmed the operational readiness of the Standby Force. On 29 January, the report was endorsed by the thirtieth Assembly of Heads of State and Government, which requested all stakeholders to support the full operationalization of the Standby Force and to harmonize the activities of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises and ad hoc coalitions with the Standby Force framework for future deployment.

46. The African Union Commission updated the Maputo strategic workplan (2016–2020), including recommendations contained in the report on the independent verification exercise, to assist in facilitating the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the African Standby Force. The Commission also continued its review of the current doctrine of the Standby Force in order to develop it into a peace support operations doctrine and concept for the Standby Force.

47. In order to develop a comprehensive legal framework on the deployment of the African Standby Force, a process has been under way to engage with the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms to agree on harmonized political decision-making and mandating procedures. The African Union Commission issued training directives for the Standby Force for the period 2018–2020 as part of its efforts to develop an exercise in the planning, management and training capability of the Standby Force. Relevant regional economic communities and regional mechanisms were also directed to conduct at least two continental and regional level exercises each year.

48. The African Union Commission developed a common costs document that contains details on the categories of support that are expected to be provided and funded by the African Union through the Peace Fund. The document served to guide the Commission in facilitating the planning, rapid deployment and sustainment of African Union peace support operations and was approved at the tenth meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Defence, Safety and Security in January.

49. Last, the African Union has made progress on the development of logistics capabilities, including the establishment of the Continental Logistics Base and the strategic lift capability of the African Standby Force. Since the inauguration of the Continental Logistics Base in Douala, Cameroon, on 5 January, efforts have been focused on its operationalization as a key enabler of the African Standby Force, in particular through the deployment of a start-up team and work on standard operating procedures. The African Union Commission is also facilitating the establishment and operationalization of a continental movement control centre for the coordination of strategic lift operations, as well as regional movement control centres in the five subregions.

Update on the development of a reporting framework

50. In the light of the imperatives of flexibility and ownership in both organizations and the well-established reporting frameworks that have been developed over decades by the Secretariat, a reporting framework is being developed in conjunction with the African Union with consideration of the complementary processes of and unique differences between the two organizations.

51. As highlighted in the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of 2 May, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission established an interdepartmental task force on the operationalization of the Peace Fund and the African Union-United Nations partnership with respect to securing predictable and sustainable financing for peace support operations mandated or authorized by the African Union. Discussions with the task force regarding the style, format, content and frequency of information-sharing and reporting on mandate delivery and accountability will continue with regard to reporting between the United Nations Secretariat and the Commission and by the Secretariat and the Commission to the two Councils.

52. With regard to fiduciary reporting in cases where an intervention is partially or fully funded through United Nations assessed contributions, it was agreed with the African Union Commission that the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, as well as its financial and budgetary procedures and standard reporting framework, would apply. This would include formal results-based budgets and budget performance reports, financial reporting, compliance and audits.

53. My report on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations (S/2017/454) contained proposed financing models for United Nations support for African Union peace support operations. The models included voluntary contributions to a trust fund, joint financing and budgeting, the support office model, joint financing of a hybrid mission, and a direct subvention to the African Union. Comprehensive support for the financing mechanisms requires a coordinated approach between United Nations organs. While the Security Council endorses a mandate that includes a possible support package, the reporting framework for financing remains within the purview of the General Assembly. The activation of one of the funding models mentioned above would require advance preparation, which would include determining, inter alia, the specific financing modalities and budgeting processes for each respective model and how the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces would be applied in each case.

V. Partnership with other regional organizations and arrangements

54. Regional economic communities and regional mechanisms are often the first to experience the early warning signs of impending conflict and have the most to gain from conflict prevention. They are important partners to the United Nations in promoting dialogue and reconciliation, exercising influence on parties to conflict to ensure the implementation of peace agreements, countering terrorism, preventing violent extremism and addressing migration issues. At the same time, recent experience has illustrated that regional interests and proximity to the parties can also complicate conflict prevention and resolution efforts, highlighting the importance of effective partnership for the two organizations and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms to engage early and develop a common understanding of conflicts and a coordinated response.

55. On 20 September 2017, I met the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the margins of the General Assembly to discuss trilateral cooperation and identify new areas for collaboration. A further meeting, which also included the President of the European Commission, was held on the margins of the African Union-European Union Summit. At the summit, which was held in Côte d'Ivoire on 29 and 30 November, the situation of migrants and refugees in Libya was discussed, and it was agreed that a joint task force of the African Union, European Union and United Nations would be created to assist voluntary returns to countries of origin and the resettlement of those in need of international protection. The task force was formally launched in Addis Ababa on 4 December, and met in Brussels on 14 December to discuss concrete initiatives and actions. On 22 February 2018, a high-level mission of the three organizations visited Tripoli to assess the progress that had been made and to enhance cooperation with Libyan authorities in the joint response to migration and protection challenges. Between 28 November 2017 and 30 May 2018, a total of 13,919 persons received assistance under the IOM humanitarian voluntary return programme. The United Nations also worked closely with the African Union, its Ad Hoc High-level Committee on Libya and other regional organizations, including the European Union and the League of Arab States, in addressing political, security and humanitarian challenges in Libya.

56. In addition, the United Nations and the European Union supported preparations for the July 2018 elections in Mali. The European Union was also an important partner to the United Nations more generally in the Sahel region, including through the provision of financing for the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel and in support of AMISOM in Somalia.

VI. Activities of the United Nations Office to the African Union

57. UNOAU continued to work closely with the African Union to strengthen collaboration and unity of action. The Office is the conduit for enhancing the strategic and operational partnership with the African Union, providing continuous political engagement, substantive and technical support, and facilitating convergence in decision-making, including between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council. Regular consultations with the senior leadership of the African Union Commission resulted in enhanced, forward-looking joint action with the African Union and regional economic communities and regional mechanisms. My Special Representative to the African Union continued to promote the importance of a common understanding and joint analysis of conflict situations in devising coordinated conflict prevention and management strategies.

58. My Special Representative to the African Union also undertook, in coordination with the African Union Commission and in consultation with SADC, preventive diplomacy missions in the Comoros in October and November 2017 and in February 2018 to support the national dialogue process, as well as in Madagascar in October and in March to help to create an environment conducive to peaceful presidential and legislative elections. Joint United Nations-African Union messaging emphasized the need for a consensual, transparent and inclusive approach in order to address a political stalemate and avert election-related violence, respectively. Further political engagements were carried out by the Special Representative in support of African Union efforts towards a common regional strategy, including through a mission carried out in the Sudan in March.

59. As a result of UNOAU advocacy and coordination, United Nations and African Union special representatives delivered joint briefings to the two Councils more

frequently, and engaged in coordinated mediation and good offices activities in areas of common concern. UNOAU provided 45 briefings to the Peace and Security Council, presenting United Nations positions on emerging and ongoing crises, and facilitated briefings by my special representatives and envoys. The two organizations also issued joint statements that demonstrated their alignment in support of political processes and in addressing political crises. In addition to substantive support, UNOAU facilitated field visits by the Peace and Security Council and visits by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission to Somalia, South Sudan and the Sahel region, and provided logistical support to missions to the African Union.

60. UNOAU continued to support the implementation of the mechanisms of the African Peace and Security Architecture by providing expert technical advice and facilitating surge capacity from United Nations headquarters and other entities. Those activities included a workshop conducted in New York from 4 to 8 June for the Peace and Security Council Committee of Experts on the work and procedures of the Security Council; a workshop conducted in Nairobi on 12 and 13 April on integrating indicators on atrocity crimes into the Continental Early Warning System; and UNOAU participation in the inaugural meeting of the African Network of Women in Conflict Prevention and Peace Mediation, also known as "FemWise", a new network of women peacemakers, under the umbrella of the Panel of the Wise, to share best practices in mediation. In addition, UNOAU provided technical support through working-level engagements in partnership with the African Union on conflict prevention and management.

61. UNOAU supported AMISOM by providing technical advice through participation in operational assessments, implementation planning, capability readiness assessments, joint reviews and reviews of concepts of operations. Coordination among the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Support Office in Somalia and UNOAU ensures common messaging and positions, including on United Nations support for AMISOM.

62. UNOAU also supported the planning and management of other peace support operations mandated by the African Union, including through a joint assessment for the establishment of the headquarters of the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel in July 2017. Advice to the Multinational Joint Task Force was also provided through participation in the meetings of the joint steering committee of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union aimed at streamlining additional African Union support. UNOAU actively participated in verification missions of the rapid deployment capability of the regional standby forces across the five African Standby Force regions between July and October 2017, and provided expertise towards the establishment of the Continental Logistics Base in January 2018 and towards the development of the strategic lift capability. Furthermore, UNOAU participated in assessment missions led by the African Union in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria and Somalia, leading to the development of standards for ammunition safety management and improvised explosive device mitigation.

VII. Observations and recommendations

63. The United Nations and the African Union continue to prioritize the development of a systematic, predictable and strategic partnership based on mutual respect, shared values and comparative advantages. Such a partnership ensures better-coordinated, coherent and effective initiatives to prevent, resolve and manage the increasingly complex peace and security challenges in Africa. I welcome the progress made in the partnership, in particular the trend towards joint briefings of the two Councils by special representatives and envoys of the two organizations, joint field

visits by senior officials and greater collaboration between the Secretariat and the African Union Commission. I welcome the intention expressed by members of the two Councils to conduct joint field missions in the near future in order to facilitate the formulation of common positions and recommendations.

64. Contemporary threats to peace and security in Africa are placing new demands on the United Nations, the African Union and the regional economic communities and regional mechanisms. The successful management of political crises and the prevention or mitigation of violent conflict on the continent have been achieved when African States are unified, enabling the African Union and the United Nations to support efforts to prevent conflict and sustain peace. The two organizations must continue to work closely with regional economic communities and regional mechanisms and neighbouring countries to address conflicts on the continent, ensure consistency of messaging and align positions and action.

65. As part of the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, regional organizations will play a central role in collectively addressing the existing challenges to peacekeeping. I intend to involve the African Union in particular in the process of capturing mutual commitments to peacekeeping through a declaration to which Member States will be invited to subscribe later in 2018.

66. The African Union continues to make commendable progress in enhancing its capabilities in conflict prevention and resolution, including in peace support operations. States members of the African Union are working towards self-reliance and have paid the highest level of contributions since the establishment of the Peace Fund in 1993. I welcome the intention of the Security Council, expressed in its resolution 2378 (2017), to consider practical steps that can be taken to establish the mechanism through which peace support operations led by the African Union could be partly financed through United Nations assessed contributions. The updates contained in section IV of the present report provide a basis for continued discussion on this issue. The Secretariat will engage further with the interdepartmental task force of the African Union Commission on the operationalization of the Peace Fund and the African Union-United Nations partnership with respect to securing predictable and sustainable financing for peace support operations mandated or authorized by the African Union. In line with the requests expressed by the Council in its resolutions 2320 (2016) and 2378 (2017), I intend to explore in greater detail with the General Assembly the financing options outlined in section IV of the report on options for authorization and support for African Union peace support operations (S/2017/454).

67. Achieving genuine progress on the compliance framework for African Union peace support operations remains a long-term and gradual effort that will require continued strong commitment by the African Union and United Nations leadership, including sustained capacity in the African Union Commission and the ability to show tangible progress in existing operations. It will also require the same level of commitment by Member States and relevant partners.

68. The ongoing reforms in the United Nations and the African Union provide an opportunity to reconfigure the Secretariat and the African Union Commission to better address contemporary peace and security challenges. Resources are limited, and demands remain high. It is becoming critical to be more creative and work to each institution's comparative advantages. The endeavours of the two organizations must be anchored in a firm commitment to strengthening multilateralism, recognizing that their common destiny lies in greater international cooperation to address the complex challenges facing Africa and impacting the rest of the world. In this regard, I remain resolutely committed to deepening partnerships with the African Union across the continent, including with regional economic communities and regional mechanisms, Member States, the private sector and civil society.

69. UNOAU is the conduit and main interlocutor between the United Nations and the African Union. The engagements between UNOAU and African Union officials are essential to the efforts to strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. In discharging this important responsibility, I remain mindful of the need to review and strengthen the Office in line with the growing demands of the partnership. In the coming months, I intend to conduct the assessment requested in Security Council resolution 2320 (2016) and to report on the findings in my next report to the Council.

70. I pay tribute to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, for his leadership and his unwavering commitment to the partnership with the United Nations, and more generally to multilateralism. I also express my appreciation to the African Union, its member States and regional economic communities and regional mechanisms for their continued cooperation in addressing challenges to peace and security in Africa. Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to my Special Representative to the African Union, Haile Menkerios, as well as the staff of UNOAU and all United Nations and African Union entities working to advance the common effort for peace, security and development in Africa.